

Community Engagement Task Force Meeting

Tuesday, March 14, 2017
4:00pm-6:00pm

Task Force Members: Brad Johnson, Damon Circosta, George Chapman, Carole Meyre, Valerie Jordan, Tom Oxholm, Amy Fulk, Courtney Crowder, Joyce Fitzpatrick

Guests: 7

City Staff: 7

- I. **Introduction-** Damon called the meeting to order and went over the goals for the meeting. Damon opened the floor for general remarks from Task Force members.
 - a. George noted there is a lot of engagement occurring throughout the City currently. He gave an example of direct citizen contact between one of his neighbors and City staff.
 - b. Damon, George, and Tom spoke about the population growth of Raleigh and the importance of keeping Raleigh cutting edge.
- II. **New Community Engagement Structure-** The second draft of the Community Engagement Structure was handed out to Task Force members and meeting guests. Damon opened the floor for input from Task Force members.
 - a. **Level One: Raleigh City Council-**
 - i. A suggestion was made to change the verbiage in the first paragraph to reflect all engagement methods should be tracked back to City Council. This new wording will state City Council should be held accountable for citizen engagement.
 - ii. There was further discussion on ensuring the new system held City Council accountable for citizen engagement.
 - b. **Level Two: Community Engagement Board (CEB)-**
 - i. Discussion on the duties of the CEB, such as, providing oversight for the implementation of community engagement methods.
 - ii. Task members discussed splitting bullet #5 into separate items (metrics and reports).
 1. Valerie questioned how often the CEB would collect metrics and report measurements. Will the CEB function similar to current City Boards and Commissions?
 2. Amy suggested the language be changed to reflect the CEB will define and collect metrics to continually improve the system. The CEB will provide an annual report to City Council.
 - iii. There was discussion on bullet point #6 (program of recognition). Carol will work on the bullet point to encapsulate her thoughts.
 - iv. **Possible Structure:**
 1. What should be done in the interim while CECs are being developed? This may be an opportunity for some RCAC members to transition over to the CEB.
 2. Carol recommended more than one person from the RCAC be added to the CEB.
 3. George had concerns with the board becoming too large. Would like for the board to remain at 8 people.
 4. The Task Force discussed the possibility of 3 open seats to be filled with current RCAC members.
 5. The CEB would function as a traditional advisory board and submit reports to City Council.

v. **Level Three: Citizen Engagement Councils (CECs)-**

1. Tom recommended the document state the ‘why’ for the CECs.
2. George explained the size selected would be effective in citizen engagement. They would be a system created by the City with a specific purpose.
3. Carol was concerned about not reaching the neighborhoods because the size of the CECs would be too large.
4. How do the CAC differ from the CEC? Brad, Damon and George spoke to the strong charge CECs will have to involve the neighborhoods and other organizations in the system. Also, incentives should be provided for doing that. The CEBs goal is to set the standards and goals for the CECs.
5. Tom expressed concerns regarding the current size of CACs and the growth of the City’s population.
6. Joyce stated one goal of CECs is to have an improved communication process/ system (two-way communication).
7. Carol expressed concern with relying on City staff to engage City Involvement Network (CIN). Currently, the CAC Chairs are tasked with bringing outside organizations/ networks to the table. In the new model City staff would be the ones making contact.
 - a. Damon shared the CEB should make sure the CEC and CIN happen. The CEB will provide oversight.
8. Joyce stated the CEB will drive the communication plan/ marketing efforts.
9. The CIN networks can opt in to be part of the network.
10. Brad inquired on how the CECs will be staffed once implemented.
11. Task Force discussed some incentives for neighborhoods joining the CIN:
 - a. Eligibility for neighborhood improvement grants and access to the CEC and CEB.
 - b. Valerie suggested having an accelerated version of the City’s current leadership programs (Citizens Leadership Academy & Raleigh Neighborhood College).
12. What things happen at the CEC levels? Is there advocacy on this level or will they train citizens to advocate for themselves? Inform and educate.
13. Joyce stated one primary change for the current engagement structure is moving from “advisory” to fostering “engagement”.
14. Brad suggested the community center as the clubhouse for engagement in that area. This could be a place for capacity building, networking, and engaging the neighborhoods. The CEC would be more than just a meeting.
15. Damon stated CECs would foster advocacy versus providing advocacy. The advocacy would take place on the CIN level.
16. Brad explained that there may be times where there may not be a leadership component on the CEC level.
17. Carol continued to express concerns regarding the lack of advocacy from the CEC level. How will the CECs (large geographic areas) come to consensus on local concerns?
18. Damon described the CECs in more detail:
 - a. Similar to a distributed neighborhood college
 - b. Community Center as a robust CIN hub
 - c. Want to avoid the CECs from becoming a Council engaged body
 - d. Goal is more grassroots participation
19. Brad revisited the item of the CECs aligning more with City Council districts so this adds accountability to Council Members.
20. Tom agreed and stated this is how to keep the Council Members engaged.
21. Damon expressed concerns with making it Council Member driven.

22. Discussion on ways the City can have one avenue of communication distribution versus through different sources. How do you align communications?
23. George stated they are trying to create a process to legislate and enable citizens to engage more effectively with the City and provide necessary resources.
24. Where is the dialogue?
25. Joyce envisions a facilitated conversation with small group conversations. People will be grouped by their similar interest and concerns and engage in a guided conversation then report out to the larger group. This process engages a lot more people with active dialogue.
 - a. Similar to an Unconference
26. The Task Force discussed the possibility to create subcommittees/ smaller advisory groups (10 people) to work on the concerns addressed in the CECs. This smaller group would be assigned for a year and would meet on a consistent basis. This smaller group would be on the CIN level and would report back to the CEC.

c. Level Four: City Involvement Network (CIN)-

- i. Joyce stated this is a wonderful opportunity to engage more people.
 1. Regional Raleigh Neighborhood College opportunity.
- ii. George and Joyce will work on a preamble for the document.

d. Level Five: Engaging the Public-

- i. Damon stated the CEB needs to be a driver in the communication process.
- ii. Level 5 should be a general paragraph which allows the CEB to review more in depth.
- iii. Carol and Brad agree with speaking to the blocks.
- iv. Damon suggests listing the blocks that arose during the Task Force process and suggest the CEB look into.
- v. Amy inquired about a previous thought of having staff review the recommendation. Carol disagreed with taking the product to staff before taking it to City Council.

- III. **Next Meeting-** During the next meeting the Task Force will review updated document. The last hour will consist of reviewing level 5 and polishing the document. Brad will work with staff to send out a doodle request in case the Task Force needs an additional work session.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 17th from 9-11am.

IV. **Adjourn**